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MON CALAMARI STAR CRUISER

Admiral Ackbar's Rebel flagship

Mon Mothma

Obi-Wan's mission

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STAR WARS

"ONCE THE SHIELD IS DOWN, OUR CRUISERS WILL CREATE A PERIMETER..."

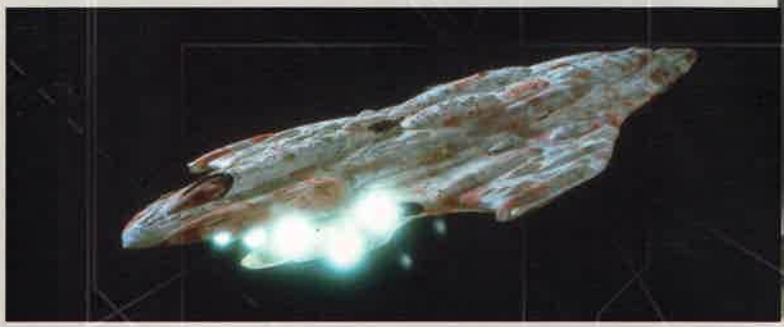
ADMIRAL ACKBAR

For the Rebel Alliance, the decision of the Mon Calamari people to join the struggle against Emperor Palpatine was a turning point. Ousting the Empire from their world, the Mon Calamari set about converting their elegant starliners into warships. These were to be the backbone of the Alliance Fleet at the Battle of Endor and beyond.

MON CALAMARI CRUISERS

A LIFELINE FOR THE GALAXY

The Mon Calamari people of the planet Dac were a peaceful people, famed for their shipbuilding expertise. The Empire, with the help of Quarren extremists, enslaved the people of Dac, leading the Mon Calamari to throw their lot in with the Rebel Alliance.



It was Admiral Ackbar, a charismatic Mon Calamari leader and military genius, who convinced his people to join the Rebellion rather than going it alone. As a result, the Rebel Fleet suddenly gained a large number of capital-class ships. The ships were all converted from former civilian vessels – luxury liners, transports, even deep-space exploration craft. Even before the Mon Calamari joined the Rebellion, schematics existed for military versions of the majority of the civilian starships the Mon Cal shipyards produced. Despite having been hastily modified for war, and despite being uniquely Mon Calamari-friendly in design, all proved to be well suited to the task at hand.

Organic Design

Unlike the more angular ships that were manufactured by just about every other shipyard in the galaxy, Mon Calamari vessels were more curved and organic-looking, their surfaces dotted with bubble-like pods and protuberances. Predominant amongst the ship types gifted to the Rebellion were the huge, powerful MC80 cruisers. Averaging out at around 1200m long, these capital ships were the

salvation of the Alliance fleet. Though lightly armed by comparison with the Imperial equivalent, and with weaker hulls because of their civilian origins, the ships did have very impressive shield systems. With a defensive pattern made up of the fields from a great many overlapping shield units, with built-in redundancy. This enabled technicians to quickly swap out or repair shields during combat without exposing the ship to significant danger. The smaller shielding systems had another advantage – their sources were harder to spot, even for starfighters, and so harder to target.

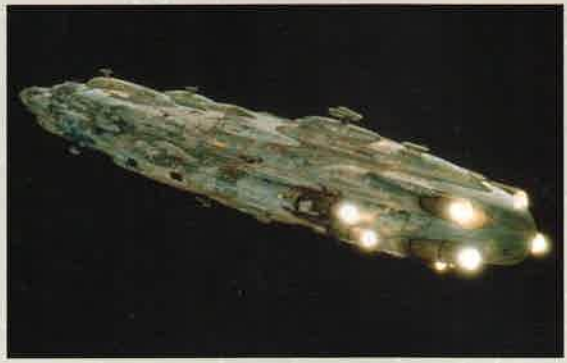
Modular But Different

The 'handcrafted' Mon Calamari cruisers were each unique, despite having belonged to a specific ship class before conversion. Although their systems, and even their hull sections, contained a number of modular units that made the ships very versatile, the individuality of each ship meant maintenance was a challenge for non-Mon Cal Alliance personnel – something that the Mon Calamari sought to alleviate where possible as time went on. Despite this, the Rebel Alliance never once regretted the addition of the Mon Calamari cruisers and personnel to their fleet.

HOME ONE

ALLIANCE FLAGSHIP AT THE BATTLE OF ENDOR

The addition of the Mon Calamari capital ships to the Rebel Alliance fleet allowed some of the effects of the defeat at Hoth to be greatly reduced. The MC80 cruiser *Home One* became de facto headquarters to senior Alliance staff.



Originally designed as deep space exploration vessels, the *Home One* type of MC80 Star Cruiser were naturally better armoured than civilian ships intended for operation in less hostile environments. The *Home One* type was named after the original *Home One*, the famous flagship of the Rebel Alliance fleet, which went on to become home for Admiral Ackbar, Supreme Commander of the Fleet, and for many of the Alliance High Command for some time after the loss of Echo Base during the Battle of Hoth. As a result, *Home One* was also known as the Headquarters Frigate. The *Home One* type of MC80 Star Cruiser was not as common as the MC80 Liberty type, but was more famous within the Alliance and, later, within the New Republic.

Ready For Battle

Home One was 1300m long, lightly armed for a capital ship with a mere 36 turbolaser cannon, 36 heavy ion cannon and 6 tractor beam projectors. However, she possessed the same triple-redundant shielding system as other MC80 cruisers, so was able to soak up a lot of damage. *Home One* had a command crew

made up entirely of Mon Calamari officers. This was because the controls and displays were the original systems – very difficult for non-Mon Calamari to use. This was true of most MC80 cruisers, though it was addressed in later ships built for the New Republic.

The Battle of Endor

At Endor, the Mon Calamari crews and ships performed magnificently. The effective shielding allowed the starships to go toe-to-toe with the better-armed Imperial Star Destroyers and to survive, inflicting significant damage on the larger vessels. They lasted long enough for the Death Star II to be destroyed, and served for decades with the New Republic Navy.

"At that close range we won't last long against those Star Destroyers." Admiral Ackbar
"We'll last longer than we will against that Death Star and we might just take a few of them with us." General Lando Calrissian

ADMIRAL ACKBAR

SLAVE TO STATESMAN

Born on Dac around twenty years before the fall of the Old Republic, Ackbar was leader of the Calamarian Council when the Empire enslaved his people and the Quarren. He became a resistance leader before being captured and gifted as a slave to Imperial Grand Moff Tarkin.

Ackbar had lead the resistance so well that the Mon Calamari briefly freed their world from the Imperials, before falling to a massive counter attack. Ackbar's abilities earned him his special status as a gift to Tarkin. The Grand Moff often debated with Ackbar, respecting him up to a point. For his part, the wily Mon Calamari took the time to learn all he could from Tarkin, hoping that one day he would be able to turn that knowledge against the Empire.

Rescued By The Alliance

That opportunity came when Tarkin's shuttle was attacked at Eriadu. Tarkin was the target, of course, but he escaped. In the end, the Alliance saved the slave he had abandoned in a crippled shuttle. Ackbar passed on his knowledge, such as it was, of the Empire's new Death Star project as well as other intelligence before he returned to his people to once again lead the Dac resistance as Admiral of the Mon Calamari Fleet. While the rest of the Mon Calamari leadership were wary of the Alliance, Ackbar did what he could to help. Eventually, just prior to the Battle of Yavin, the Calamarian Council relented and

Dac joined the Rebels. Now the Mon Calamari and the Quarren united under Ackbar to finally free their world. From this time, Ackbar split his time between leading his people's military and working for the greater galactic cause. As Alliance Commander Ackbar, he headed up the Shantipole Project that developed the B-wing starfighter. Its success saw his promotion to Admiral, and his victories for the Alliance brought Mon Mothma to the decision to make him Supreme Commander of the Rebel Fleet and head of military operations.

"It's a Trap!"

Admiral Ackbar

PROFILE

Admiral Ackbar

Species

Mon Calamari

Homeworld

Dac (Mon Calamari)

Gender

Male

Height

1.8 metres

Affiliation

Calamarian Council, Rebel Alliance, New Republic

Father of the Alliance Navy

The Rebel Alliance Fleet, though bolstered by the arrival of converted Mon Calamari Star Cruisers, had significant issues. The fleet was patchy, made up of ships and crews from all across the galaxy. Some had even been at odds with each other until the Empire had forced them to unite. Ackbar brought the Fleet together through training and extensive reorganisation. Four years after the Battle of Yavin, the Fleet was to face its greatest test. After the Battle of Hoth, the Rebel Fleet had become even more vital, particularly as it now housed the Alliance High Command. The Emperor sought to draw the Alliance into a trap at Endor, with himself and a new Death Star as bait. The Rebels could do little but accept. A trap was sprung, with the Alliance Fleet trapped between the operational Death Star II and a large Imperial Fleet. Though he initially sought to withdraw, Ackbar was instead quickly convinced to directly engage the Imperial ships in the kind of close-quarters assaults he specialised in. When the Death Star II was destroyed, Ackbar led the Alliance Fleet in capturing a number of routing Imperial Star

Did You Know...?

In Episode VI: *Return of the Jedi*, Admiral Ackbar was played by puppeteer Tim Rose and voiced by Erik Boauersfield. Rose operated a half-body puppet for close ups, and wore a slip-on mask for long shots. Seeing how expressive the Mon Calamari masks made for Episode III were, George Lucas briefly considered redoing the Ackbar scenes for Episode VI.

Admiral Ackbar had little time to enjoy the celebrations at Endor. He had to hold the fleet together to mop up Imperial stragglers, and had to be ready for any Imperial counter-attack.

Destroyers, adding them to his forces for future campaigns.

New Republic

A signatory to the Declaration of a New Republic, Ackbar spent the next two decades fighting to defend the galaxy and finally defeat the remains of the Empire. He also wrote the training manual for the New Republic Fleet Academy, ensuring a lasting legacy. After skirmishes with warlords and others, the New Republic began the long journey to take Coruscant, something that took two years to achieve. After that, the remaining Core Worlds had to be fought for, while Grand Admiral Thrawn and the reborn Emperor Palpatine had to be defeated. When Palpatine attacked Mon Calamari with his World Devastators, Ackbar unjustly felt he was to blame for the damage done. He later 'redeemed' himself by defending his world against Admiral Daala. Admiral Ackbar finally retired 19 years after the Battle of Endor, four years after a treaty was signed with the Imperial Remnant. He continued to advise the New Republic. In ill health, an elderly Ackbar returned five years later to plan the crushing victory against the invading Yuuzhan Vong at Ebaq 9, though he died within the year, just before the Vong were finally defeated.

THE *TARTAN*-CLASS PATROL CRUISER

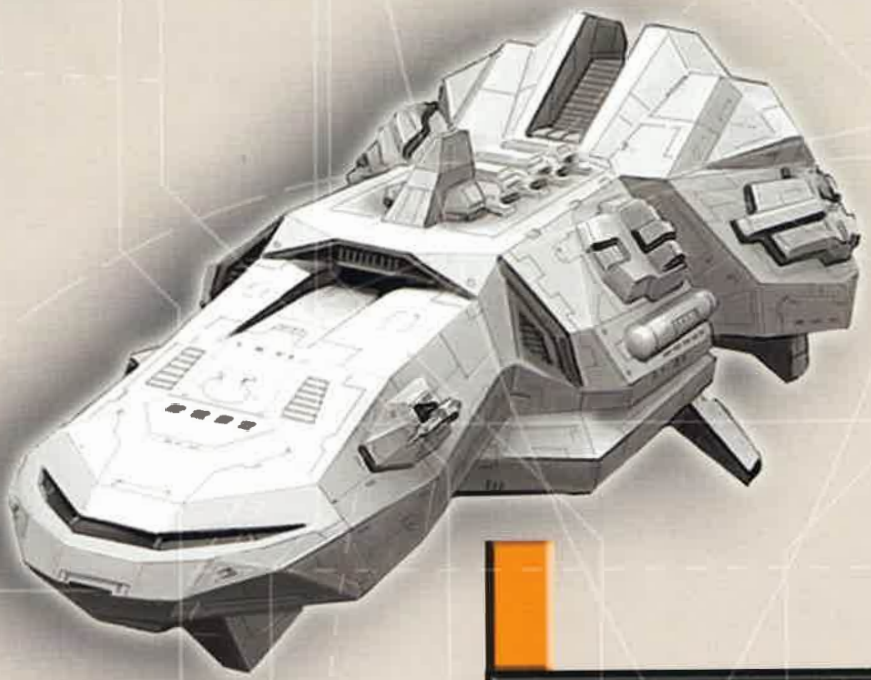
AN IMPERIAL ANTI-STARFIGHTER VESSEL

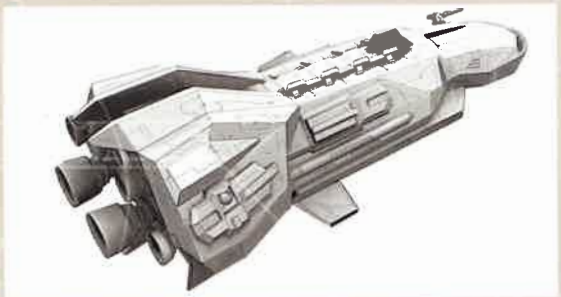
The *Carrack*-class light cruiser had been a triumph for the Damorian Manufacturing Corporation. They followed it up by developing a ship for the newly-formed Galactic Empire to help them deal with an increase in piracy.

A relatively small ship, the *Tartan*-class patrol cruiser was designed specifically to deal with starfighters, as well as fighter/bombers and other small pirate vessels. At 250m long, the ship was too lightly armoured and shielded to be expected to assault capital class ships, save in the case of being able to field overwhelmingly greater numbers. The cruisers mounted 20 laser cannon, all of which were hooked up to a powerful sensor and computer tracking system. This was rendered all the more effective by an ingenious linked power system that could quickly redirect energy to individual weapons as needed, sometimes drawing off power from the deflector shields when attack became the best form of defence.

Nimble Fighter

The *Tartan*-class cruiser was designed to directly engage starfighters, rather than sitting off and pounding them from a distance. To achieve this, the ship was fast and very nimble for a vessel of its size, with very powerful engines. The *Tartan*-class cruiser's agility allowed its sensor packages to recognise when components were being targeted and trim the ship's movements to best protect the targeted areas. Unfortunately, all of these clever and powerful systems meant that the *Tartan*-class cruisers were very expensive. Because of this, these vessels never saw large-scale deployment, as Imperial commanders preferred to field large numbers of cheaper, disposable TIE fighters to deal with pirates and other rebellious starfighter attacks.





PROFILE
Tartan-class Patrol Cruiser

Type

Anti-starfighter light cruiser

Manufacturer

Damorian Manufacturing Corporation

Size

250m long

Weapons

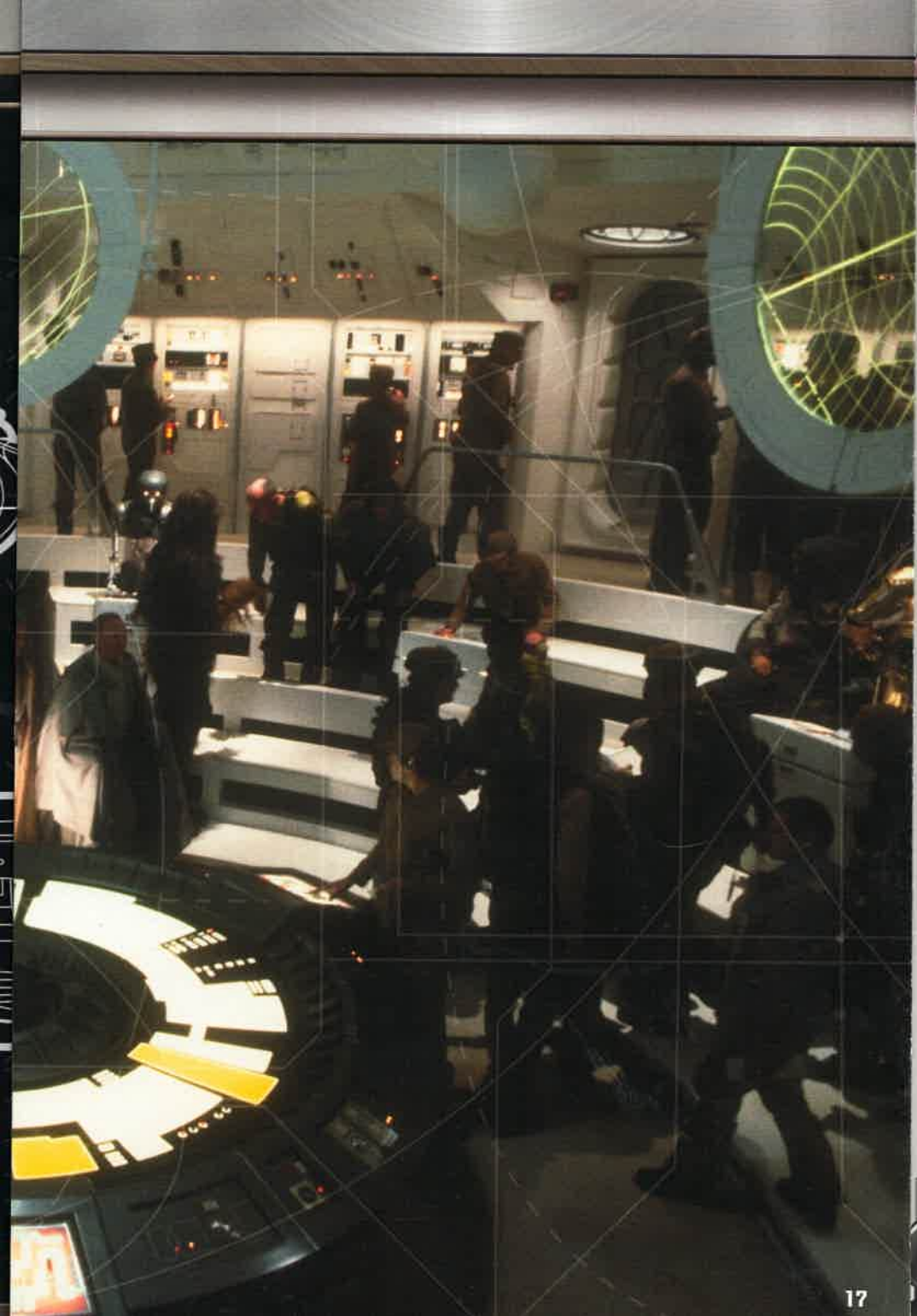
20 x laser cannon

Affiliation

Galactic Empire

MON CALAMARI
STAR CRUISERS

Ahead of the Battle of Endor, the briefing room aboard *Home One*, flagship of the Rebel Alliance Fleet, saw a gathering of some of the most important figures in the Alliance leadership. Many of those leaders had been living and working in the cruiser since the loss of Echo Base at the Battle of Hoth. For Admiral Ackbar, *Home One* was to be his base of operations for many years thereafter.



MC80 LIBERTY-TYPE MON CALAMARI STAR CRUISER

Type
Star Cruiser (modified civilian starliner)

Manufacturer
Mon Calamari Shipyards

Length
1200 meters to 1500 meters

Engines
Array of 9 in 3 different sizes

Max Acceleration
2750G

Shielding
Triple-redundant shielding system

Weapons
48 x turbolaser, 20 x ion cannon batteries,
6 x tractor beam projectors

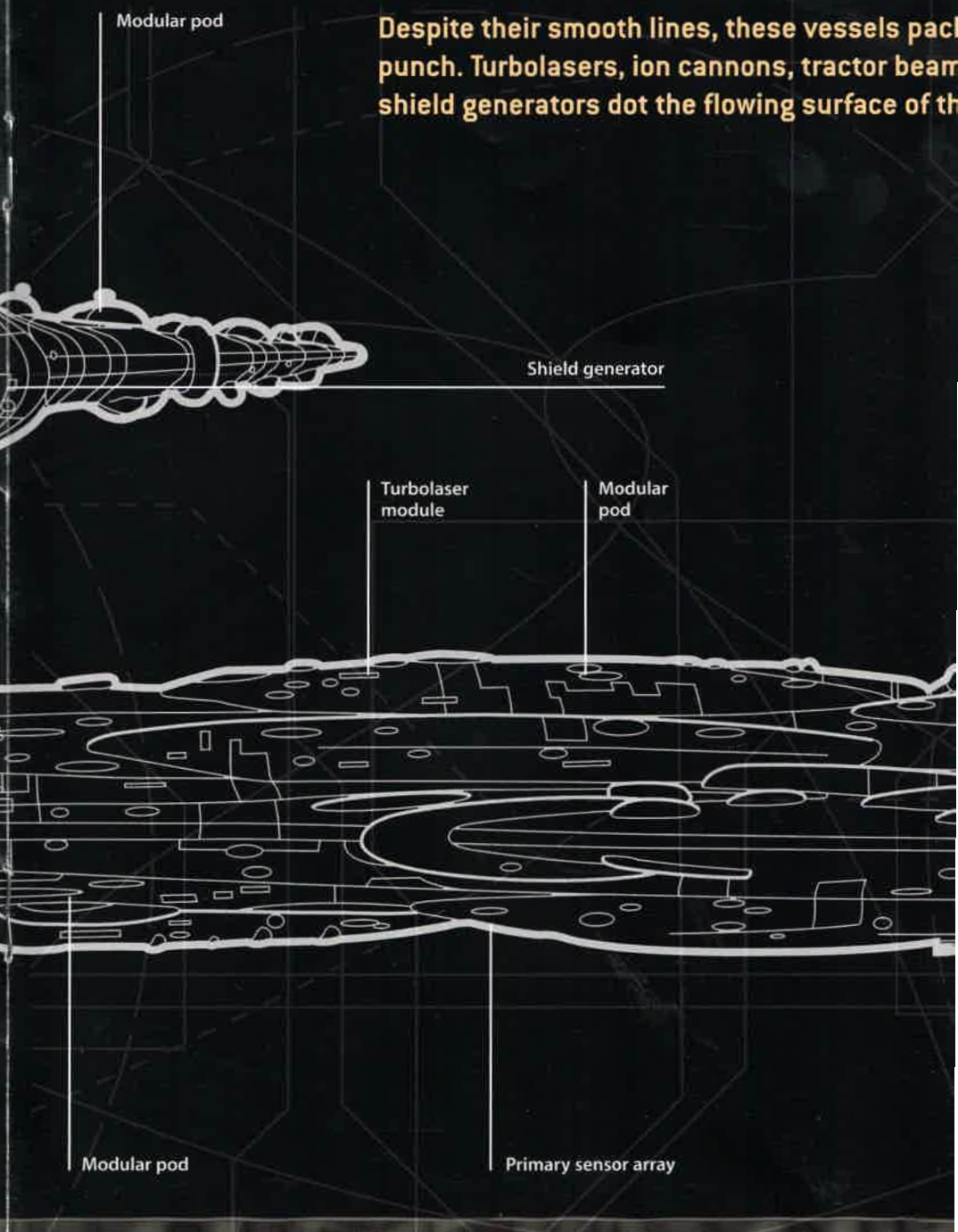
Starfighter Complement:
36 (3 squadrons), plus 5 x personnel shuttles

Crew
668 x officer, 4734 x crewmen

Affiliation:
Dac, Rebel Alliance, New Republic

Tractor beam projector
Modular pod
Officer's quarters
Primary sensor system
Ion cannon module

Despite their smooth lines, these vessels pac
punch. Turbolasers, ion cannons, tractor beam
shield generators dot the flowing surface of th



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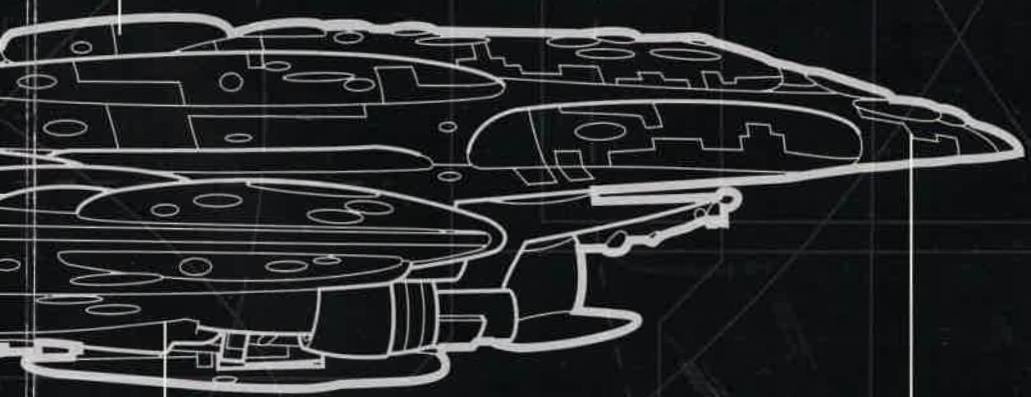
n projectors and
he ships.

Each one unique

The MC80 Liberty-type Mon Calamari Star Cruisers were converted from luxury civilian starliners. They could be distinguished from the *Viscount*-class Star Defender and particularly the Home One-type MC80s by the 'wings' to either side of the primary hull. These contained additional weapons modules and mounted some of the tractor beam projectors. The MC80 Liberty-type was by far the most numerous of the Mon Calamari vessels gifted to the Rebel Alliance. Each was subtly different, making maintenance a challenge for non-Mon Cal technicians.



MON MOTHMA

LEADER OF THE REBEL ALLIANCE

Despite a privileged upbringing, Mon Mothma of Chandrila followed her parents' examples and became a dedicated public servant. A senator at 19, she devoted her life to battling the Empire and bringing peace to the galaxy, regardless of the personal cost.

Mon Mothma was a senatorial aide to her predecessor, so was well aware of what was required of a representative at the Galactic Senate. Tragically, much of her time in the Senate was spent trying to counter the increasing influence of Supreme Chancellor Palpatine – later Emperor Palpatine. As a former member of the Loyalist Committee and a signatory on the Petition of 2000, Mon Mothma continued openly to criticise and politically combat Palpatine's excesses. A friend of the late Padmé Amidala and of Bail Organa of Alderaan, Mon Mothma was a thorn in Palpatine's side. Finally, he moved to have her arrested, but a warning from Organa allowed Mon Mothma to escape.

Fomenting Rebellion

Palpatine had been well aware that Mon Mothma had been secretly organising rebel intelligence-gathering cells. Along with Bail Organa and Garm Bel Iblis, Senator to Corellia, Mon Mothma was one of the creators of the Alliance to Restore the Republic. A leader from the outset, she was not adverse to getting her hands dirty. However, as the Alliance grew, she became exclusively an organiser, planning the war against Palpatine at all levels. When Bail Organa died at Alderaan, she and Bel Iblis clashed and he left the Alliance. Mon Mothma became the overall leader, though Iblis would later rejoin the New Republic that Mon Mothma helped create. After the Battle of Endor, Mon Mothma returned to the political arena, bringing together many worlds and systems that the Empire had set against each other. She was Chief of State until ill health forced her retirement. At this point, she handed over to Princess Leia Organa. Mon Mothma died in her sleep, leaving a galaxy largely at peace.

Did You Know...?

Mon Mothma was first played by Caroline Blakiston in Episode VI. Blakiston had to re-record her dialogue for the briefing scene when it was found that pigeons roosting in the set could be clearly heard. Mon Mothma was played by Genevieve O'Reilly in Episode III. Unfortunately, much of O'Reilly's work exists only as deleted scenes found on the *Revenge of the Sith* DVD release.

PROFILE

Mon Mothma

Homeworld
Chandrila

Species
Human

Gender
Female

Height
1.73m

Affiliation
Galactic Republic, Rebel Alliance, New Republic

THE DEATH STAR

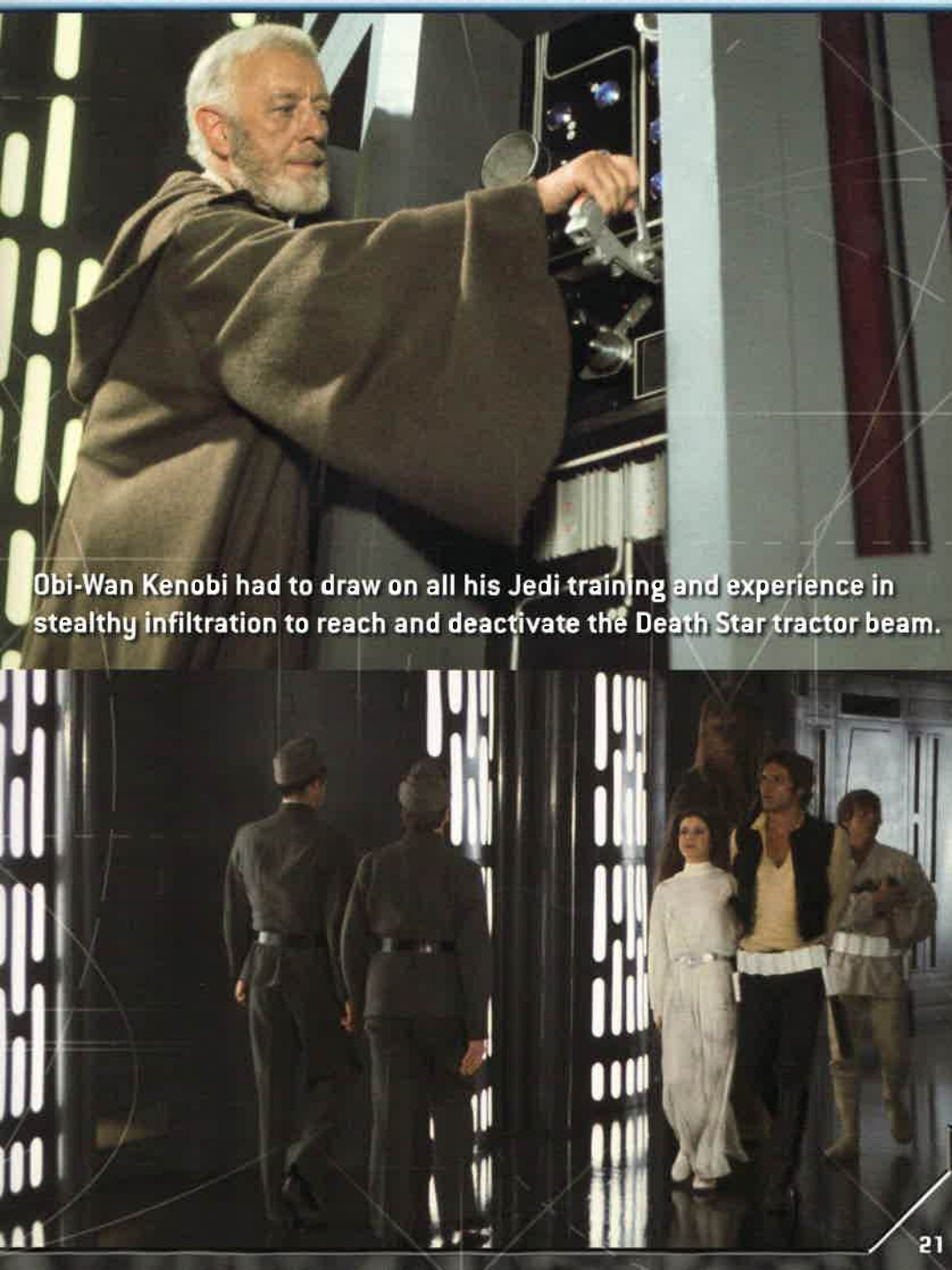
COMPLETING THE CIRCLE

When they first arrived aboard the Death Star, Obi-Wan Kenobi and his companions hid inside the smuggling compartments on the *Millennium Falcon*. Their plan had been to quietly effect an escape. To do this, Obi-Wan needed to shut down the station's tractor beams.

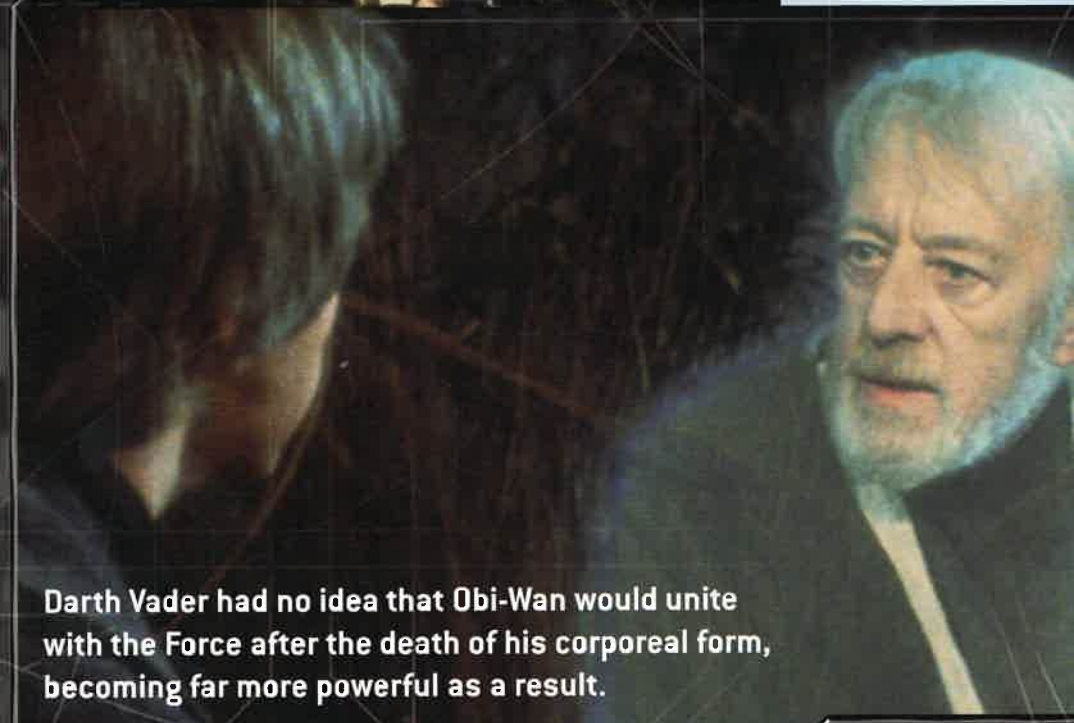
Kenobi, still reeling from the effect of feeling the death of Alderaan and its people through the Force, was initially unaware of the presence aboard the Death Star of his former Padawan Darth Vader. The *Falcon* had been towed by tractor beam into a docking bay. Its pilot, Han Solo, was able to make it look like the crew had abandoned ship in the life pods before the ship was captured. Darth Vader, who sensed Obi-Wan Kenobi had something to do with the ship, ordered scanning crews to check it thoroughly. While this was underway, Han, his co-pilot Chewbacca and Luke Skywalker, who was travelling with Obi-Wan, ambushed the scanning crew and then the two stormtrooper guards watching the *Falcon*.

The Plan

Disguised as stormtroopers, Luke and Han led a brief attack on the docking bay office. From this relatively safe haven, Obi-Wan moved to the next stage of his plan. Astromech droid R2-D2 hacked into the Imperial net, while protocol droid C-3PO translated Artoo's responses. Obi-Wan was able to tell that the Death Star tractor beam was directly powered from the station's massive reactor. This gave the tractor beams phenomenal and uninterrupted power – even a capital starship could be easily reeled in. However, Kenobi realised that interrupting just one of the seven reactor power links to the tractor beam would render it useless. Furthermore, the break would remain undiscovered until the Death Star tractor beam crew attempted to use the equipment. The Imperials had never allowed that their all-powerful Death Star could be infiltrated in the way it had been. Leaving the others behind, Obi-Wan moved off into the empty corridors of the station. By now, however, Kenobi and Vader



Obi-Wan Kenobi had to draw on all his Jedi training and experience in stealthy infiltration to reach and deactivate the Death Star tractor beam.



Darth Vader had no idea that Obi-Wan would unite with the Force after the death of his corporeal form, becoming far more powerful as a result.

Did You Know...?

The Ancient Order of the Whills were beings who had achieved a higher level of existence through their connection with the Force. Qui-Gon learned from one of their shamans how to maintain his consciousness in the Force after death. He taught the secret to Obi-Wan and Yoda during their exile. The technique allowed Kenobi to continue to advise Luke Skywalker as a 'Force ghost'. It also allowed Obi-Wan and Yoda to help Anakin to appear with them to Luke after the Battle of Endor.

were aware of each other. While Darth Vader moved eagerly to confront his former master, Obi-Wan Kenobi sought to finish his mission first.

Kenobi's Mission

The *Millennium Falcon* had been drawn into docking bay 327. With R2-D2's help, Obi-Wan had discovered the precise location of the nearest tractor beam power-generator trench. Though it was guarded, Obi-Wan managed to work his way to the control unit. Security patrols were being stepped up, with additional guards arriving even as Kenobi carefully deactivated the reactor link, all the time aware that he was perched on a ledge above a fathomless drop. His work done, Obi-Wan distracted the two guards using the Force and headed for the docking bay.

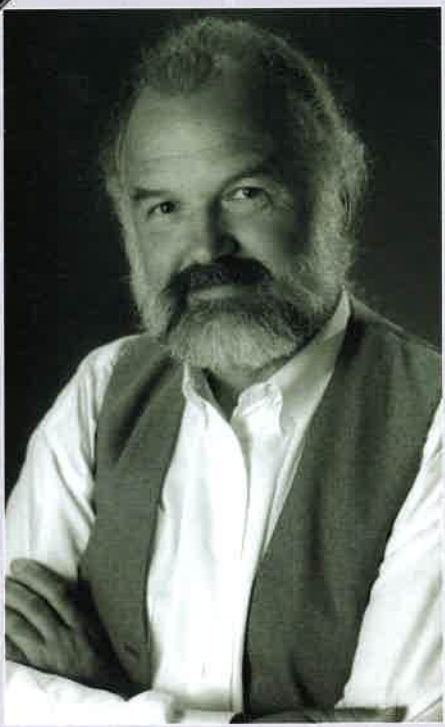
Old Friends

Obi-Wan was desperately hoping that Luke and his companions could escape Darth Vader. He was ready to do whatever was necessary to achieve this. In an access corridor leading to docking bay 327, Kenobi met Darth Vader once again. Confident he had the upper hand over the ageing Obi-Wan, Vader engaged him in a duel. Unlike their previous engagement on Mustafar, then as fiery as their youth allowed, the lightsaber battle on the Death Star was like a dejarik match between masters – considered, tactical and intense. Vader sought to bring Kenobi down with the dark side of the Force as well as with his lightsaber, and it seemed clear to the Dark Lord that he was winning. However, the moment was prepared for. During his long exile, Obi-Wan had been studying under Qui-Gon Jinn, whose spirit existed in the Force. When Darth Vader seemed to kill Kenobi, his body vanished as he too became one with the Force.

LORNE PETERSON

MODEL MAKER IN CHIEF

Lorne Peterson was one of the original members of the team that would later become Industrial Light & Magic. Hired by George Lucas in 1975, he worked on many of the iconic ships and vehicles of the *Star Wars* saga.



In 1978, George Lucas brought Peterson onto the team full time to oversee the model building for *The Empire Strikes Back*. Peterson stayed with ILM right up to the point when Lucasfilm sold the model shop in 2006 to an investor group headed by ILM veteran Mark Anderson. The result was Kerner Optical, which continues to maintain a close relationship with Lucasfilm. In 2009, Peterson worked with the Tippett Studio on the Sam Rami horror film *Drag Me To Hell*. That studio was founded in 1984 by another ILM veteran, Phil Tippett. Peterson had considered a career as an art teacher in college before becoming a model maker at ILM. For Episode IV, he worked on a number of ships and vehicles, including the Star Destroyer, Y-wing, X-wing and TIE fighters. His contribution was not just behind the scenes. It was Peterson who drew the short straw to perch in the 'crow's nest' above the South American jungles as the Rebel scout seen watching the Alliance starfighters head

Peterson on CGI versus model work on Episode I :

"...some realistic appearance effects, like textures and weathering in surface detail, can be easier and quicker to do with a real sculpture or model, with real paints and pastels rather than CG tools."

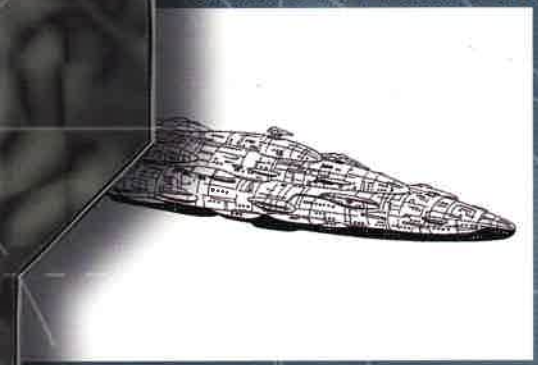
off to attack the Death Star. For Episode V, he co-created Boba Fett's *Slave I*, and for Episode VI, he worked on the Super Star Destroyer *Executor*.

Peterson won an Oscar for his work on *Indiana Jones and the Temple of Doom*, and went on to work with ILM for over 30 years. He returned to *Star Wars* for the *Special Editions* of the Original Trilogy – he built the new Jawa sandcrawler model – and then worked on the Prequel Trilogy. Peterson's work on the *Pirates of the Caribbean* series crossed over the sale of the model shop, as he worked on the second film with ILM and the went on to work on the third with Kerner Optical. In 2006 he published what is considered the definitive book on ILM's model shop – *Sculpting a Galaxy: Inside the Star Wars Model Shop*. The book was a great success, and is a fitting testament to the skills of Peterson and all the other craftsmen who worked on the *Star Wars* legend.

THREE FROM TWO

CREATING THE MON CALAMARI CRUISERS

CREATING THE LIBERTY-TYPE AND *HOME ONE*-TYPE CRUISERS



1 The long, curvaceous and smooth look of the Mon Calamari ships was to cause the ILM model team a bit of a headache...

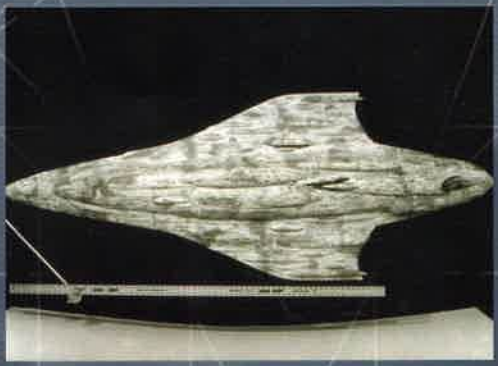
2 For almost every other ship they made, they had used pieces from commercially available model kits to detail them – a technique called 'kit-bashing'.

5 The *Liberty*-type was filmed twice – with and without wings – to help bulk out the Rebel fleet.

6 The ILM model makers nickname for the Mon Calamari ships was 'pickles'.

There seemed to be three distinct Mon Calamari star cruiser types seen during the Battle of Endor in Episode VI. However, the model makers at ILM only built two – though even that proved more complicated than expected.

3 Instead, the ILM model technicians had to cast the complex curvilinear sections for the hull and detailing from scratch.



4 The designers made two models. This one, which was much later dubbed the Liberty-type, measured 97cm x 244cm x 30cm.

7 Front side view of the Mon Calamari Star Cruiser. showing its stubby delta wings.

8 The second version, called the *Home One*-type as it was Ackbar's flagship, was 58cm x 244cm x 41cm.

1 The character of Admiral Ackbar helped illustrate which important difference between Rebels and Imperials?

2 Where did Star Wars fans first see Admiral Ackbar?

3 What was Lando Calrissian's designation at the Battle of Endor?

ANSWERS:

1. Ackbar helped show that the Rebel Alliance was made up of peoples from all across the galaxy, while the Empire continued its human-centric policies.

2. Fans first saw the character of Ackbar in the daily comic strips created by the legendary duo Archie Goodwin and Al Williamson.

3. Leading the Alliance starfighters from the Millennium Falcon during the Battle of Endor, General Lando Calrissian's call sign was Gold Leader.

U

Umpass-stay

Character
Episode VI

A Klatooinian, Umpass-stay was born a slave on the planet Shawti – an agricultural world wholly owned by the Desilijic Hutt clan. Physically strong and a skilled warrior, Umpass-stay was bodyguard to Shebba Desilijic Kalshi, who was murdered by Jabba the Hutt, Shebba's nephew. Ownership of Umpass-stay passed to Jabba, who used him as a spy in his court. The Klatooinian's only relief was when he occasionally played as a drummer for Jabba's house musicians, the Max Rebo Band. Then, he doubled on drums with Ak-rev, the Weequay. When Jabba was killed at the Pit of Carkoon, Umpass-stay was still in the palace. All he had known was a life of slavery, and he was soon lost in a confusing maze of options. In the end, Umpass-stay went back to the Desilijic clan, relieved to be back in familiar surroundings.

Luminara Unduli

Character
Episodes II & III

The famed Jedi Master Luminara Unduli was a Mirialan. Her potential was recognised early, allowing her a way off her homeworld, which was under the ownership of the Trade Federation. As a tribute to the suffering of her people, and a reflection of her devotion to the physical disciplines of the Jedi Order, she had the traditional Mirialan facial tattoos. Her people had a long tradition within the Jedi Order – only Mirialan Jedi Maters could teach Mirialan Padawans. Luminara maintained this practice, taking on a number of Mirialan Padawan – her last being Barriss Offee. Unduli was one of the 200-strong Jedi strike force sent to Geonosis, and served as a Jedi General throughout the Clone Wars. She survived up to the issuing of Order 66. It came at the end of the Battle of Kashyyyk. She was helping to heal the wounded when her troops opened fire, killing her instantly.

URoRRoR'R'R

Character
Episode IV

An excellent marksman, adept hunter, and fearsome warrior, URoRRoR'R'R was a leader of the Tusken tribe that roamed the Jundland Wastes on Tatooine. His ability with the Gaderffii stick was greatly respected by his follow tribesmen. A bold leader, he frequently led raids on moisture farms and, unlike many other Sand People, was not afraid of technology. It was URoRRoR'R'R who attacked Luke Skywalker as he and C-3PO searched for astromech R2-D2. Though he and his warriors were scared off by Obi-Wan Kenobi, they were not gone for long, though their intended victims had fled by the time the Sand People returned.

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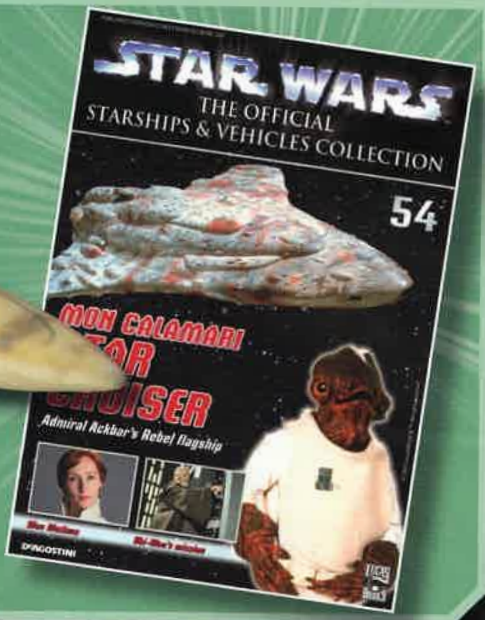

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